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ABSTRACT

This summary report provides samples from and highlights of the national assessment in arts education at the eighth-grade level conducted in 1997 by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The arts assessment measured students' literacy in the arts through their knowledge and skill in creating, performing, and responding to challenging, innovative test exercises. Sample test items and results are given from the assessment of music, theater, and the visual arts. A list of six other arts education assessment publications is included. (LB)

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THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress

ED 425 122

SO 030 562

Arts Education

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Highlights of the

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NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment Report Card

NOTE: For reasons of confidentiality, the students shown in the photographs for this report are not NAEP arts assessment participants.

In 1997 the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), commonly called "The Nation's Report Card," conducted a national assessment in arts education at the eighth-grade level. The arts assessment measured students' literacy in the arts through their knowledge and skill in **creating**, **performing**, and **responding** to challenging, innovative test exercises. This brief report provides samples from and highlights of that assessment.

The assessment established new ground for measuring student achievement. It proved that arts and other complex educational experiences could be measured in a large-scale assessment using authentic measures that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in performance settings.

The arts assessment produced a wealth of information about what eighth-grade students know and can do in music, theatre, and the visual arts. The results are important to the nation because the arts manifest a special form of literacy that makes use of visual images, sounds, movements, gestures, and the whole range of human intellect and emotion to understand the human condition, develop innovative ideas, and inform our decisions in fundamental ways.

If the arts are about creativity, innovation, new ideas, working together to produce excellence, and the ways in which individuals find a voice for expression, then our nation has cause to reflect deeply on these findings.

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NCES 98-455

The Arts Assessment

The development of the NAEP Arts Education Assessment was founded on a vision of a society that believes the arts are an essential form of literacy for every child's complete development. The expectation is not that all children will become talented artists, but that they will experience enough of the

National Goals

In 1994 Congress passed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Goal three listed the arts as one of the important core subjects for all children. Also in 1994 the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations completed the voluntary *National Standards for Arts Education*. The standards reflect a collective national wisdom about arts education learning based on many points of view.

Assessment Framework

The NAEP 1997 Framework shows the relationship of the four areas of music, theatre, the visual arts, and dance to the three arts processes of **creating**, **performing**, and **responding**. The knowledge and skills appropriate for each area are part of the assessment activities for all four disciplines. The assessment framework, developed by the National Assessment Governing Board was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. The framework reflects the voluntary national standards and is the result of a national consensus process that included teachers, artists, scholars,

Assessment Design

The 1997 National Assessment of Educational Progress in the Arts was conducted at the eighth-grade level in music, theatre, and the visual arts using a representative sample of public and nonpublic schools. Dance was not assessed because only 4% of schools had regular dance programs.

Sample

The sample of schools and students for music and the visual arts was a nationally representative sample. The sampling process allows researchers to predict what the scores might be if every child were assessed. The theatre sample was a targeted sample selected from schools that offered theatre courses and from students who took those courses. This sampling process allows researchers to predict what the scores might be for students taking theatre courses. Comparisons for this assessment can be made only at the national and regional levels.

Assessment Tasks

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discipline, challenge, and joy of creating in different art forms to understand intimately the human significance of music, theatre, the visual arts, and dance.

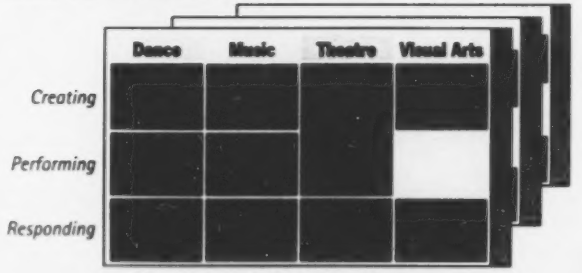
arts and education leaders, and experts in test development, as well as input from public hearings across the country.

In the framework, the term **creating** refers to generating original art. **Performing** is defined as recreating an existing work, a process that calls on a student's ability to interpret and portray someone else's creative work. **Responding** includes a student's response to a work of art or performance as well as to his or her own work.

The NAEP Arts Education Assessment developed innovative tasks for all four arts disciplines. Paper-and-pencil tasks included multiple-choice and short- and long-answer questions in response to the works of art provided.

Performance tasks asked the students to apply their knowledge and skills to activities in the arts. These activities proved to be especially challenging to develop and administer. To capture the full array of student responses in the assessment, NAEP used photography, video, and audio recording devices. In music performance tasks, students were asked to sing, use an electronic keyboard, and, in some cases, play their own instruments. Visual arts tasks allowed students to work with clay, charcoal, drawing pencils, and other construction materials. Theatre activities involved script reading, improvisation, and elements of design. Dance tasks developed but not used included creating and performing dance movements under the guidance of a trained dance facilitator.

The Framework Matrix



Based on Specific Content in the Arts Disciplines
Knowledge and Skills

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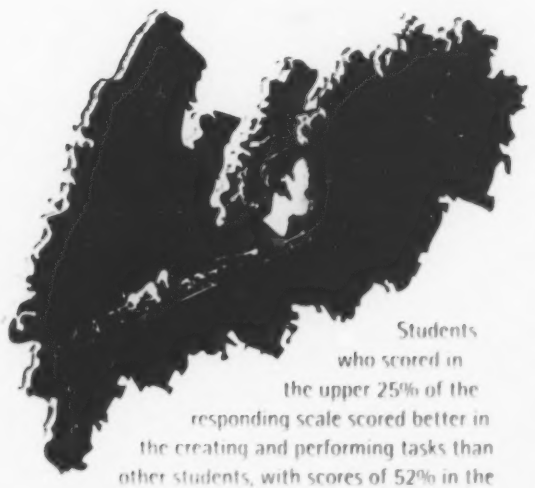
music

Music was assessed using a national sample of 2,275 students. As with theatre and the visual arts, all students were administered a set of paper-and-pencil items in a classroom setting to assess their knowledge and skills in responding to music. To measure their knowledge and skills in creating and performing, students were assessed individually and their responses were recorded for later scoring.

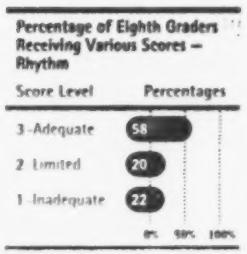


Students who scored in the upper 25% of the responding scale scored better in the creating and performing tasks than other students, with scores of 52% in the creating tasks and 56% in the performing tasks. Students who scored in the middle 50% of the responding scale also scored better than did students in the lowest group.

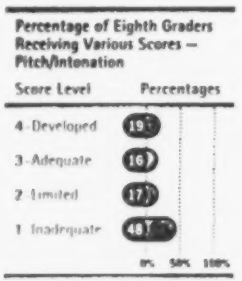
The graphs show the students' scores for all creating and performing tasks as they relate to the students' responding scores (lower, middle, and upper).

Sample questions from selected creating and performing activities illustrate the types of questions asked and the types of student responses collected. For example, students were asked to sing the song "America" with a full chorus accompaniment on tape and were rated on five different factors: rhythm, pitch/intonation, tone quality, diction, and expression. Most students could maintain an adequate rhythm but had some difficulty producing good tone quality and maintaining the correct pitch.

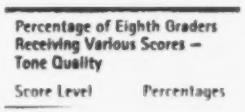
Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Rhythm



Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Pitch/Intonation



Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Tone Quality



Students were also asked to compose two measures of a short musical score to assess their ability to use musical notation. The responses were scored as **adequate**, **limited**, or **inadequate** for each of the two measures.

Sample Question 8

For question 8, you are to write an ending for the rhythmic pattern you see below. You will hear it played two times. After you hear the rhythmic pattern, write an ending to the pattern in the empty measures printed in your test booklet. The music that you write should make the rhythm sound finished. You may use notes or rests in your answer, but do not copy any of the measures that are already used in the music. Make sure that the ending that you write has the correct number of beats.

In the first measure scored, 66% of the students received the score **inadequate**, 4% received a **limited** score, and 30% received a score of **adequate**. In the last measure, 72% of the students received a score of **inadequate**, 3% received a **limited** score, and 25% received a score of **adequate**.

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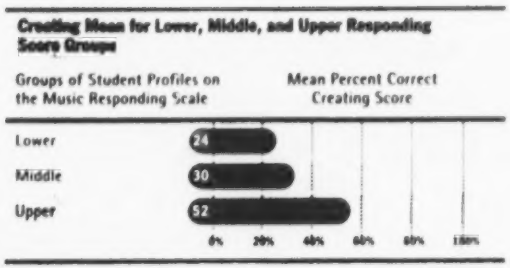
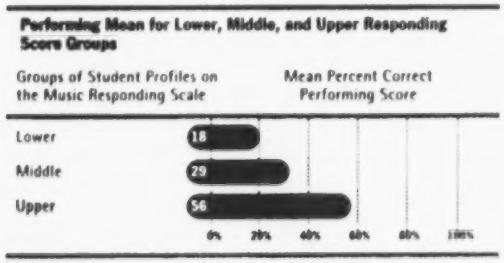
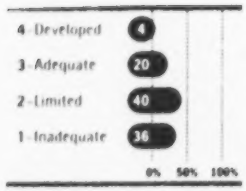
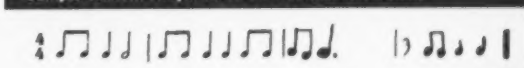




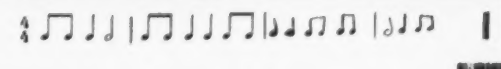


Sample Student Response 2: Use of Musical Notation



This sample student response received a score of **inadequate** on the first measure and adequate on the second measure.

Sample Student Response 4: Use of Musical Notation



This sample student response received a score of **adequate** for both measures.

Student scores from the responding section were placed on a scale that located them in the lower 25%, middle 50%, or upper 25%.

Students who were in the lower range (lower 25%) of the music scale were able to:

- Make simple distinctions about the music phrases they heard as being the same or different from examples played
- Show limited knowledge of the functional uses of music in society and very limited knowledge of the historical or cultural significance of musical genres (such as spirituals).
- Describe adequately at least one error heard in a performance of the folk song "Michael Row the Boat Ashore."

Students who were in the middle range (middle 50%) of the music scale were able to:

- Make distinctions about the melodic contour of music played.
- Show a broader understanding of the functions of music in society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic terms and fundamentals of music notation.
- Describe adequately at least three errors heard in a performance of the folk song "Michael Row the Boat Ashore."

Students who were in the upper range (top 25%) of the music scale were able to:

- Identify line drawings that reflected the texture of music they heard.
- Provide at least limited descriptions of aspects of music they heard.
- Identify and provide limited justification for their categorizations of the genres or style periods of some pieces of music they heard (such as a Scott Joplin piano rag and an aria by George Frideric Handel).
- Display more advanced knowledge of standard music notation and terminology.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

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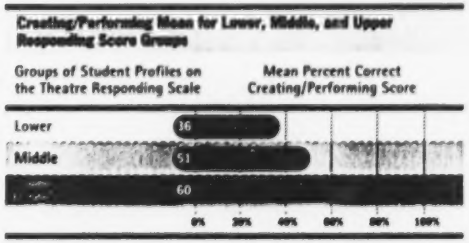
theatre

Theatre was assessed using a targeted sample of 1,386 students who took theatre courses in schools that offered them.

Many of the responding tasks used videotapes of film scenes and audiotapes of play readings to engage students in the assessment activities. The creating/performing student activities were videotaped for scoring at a later time. Most of the creating/performing student responses were scored on a number of factors; each student received a separate score for each factor according to his or her performance.

As with music and the visual arts, all students were administered a set of paper-and-pencil items in a classroom setting to assess their knowledge and skills in responding to theatre.



Students who did well on the paper-and-pencil responding portion of the assessment also scored relatively well on the creating/performing tasks, with the upper level mean scores at 60%.

In the creating/performing sections, students were asked to perform in a variety of activities to apply and display their knowledge and skill in theatre.

For example, students were asked to create a scene from a short script. The students were scored on a variety of factors, such as expression, vocal production, and how well the group performed together.

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Student scores from the responding section were placed on a scale that located them in the lower 25%, middle 50%, or upper 25%.

Students in the lower range (lower 25%) of the theatre responding scale were able to:

- Make simple inferences based on visual and aural information about character and location.
- Identify necessary sound effects for the staging of a short script.
- Display a rudimentary understanding of the purpose of the title song in the film *Meet Me in St. Louis* and identify the genre of that film.

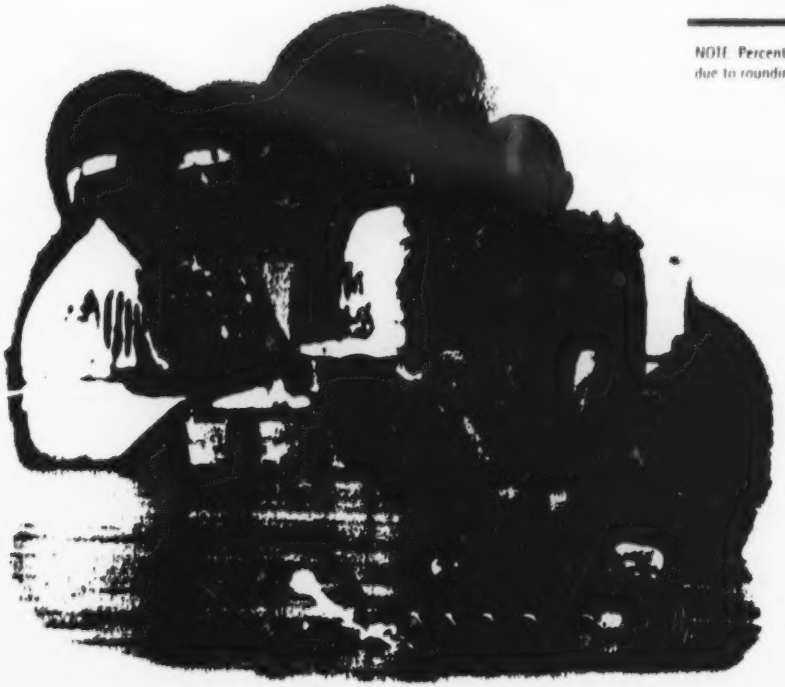
Students in the middle range (middle 50%) of the theatre responding scale were able to:

- Make inferences based on scripts, film, and audiotape about necessary props and costumes for staging performances.
- Describe in general terms how to stage a portion of a play told by a narrator.
- Show an initial understanding of how an actor used his voice to convey character.
- Identify the effect of a camera shot in the film *Jezebel*.
- Show some understanding of how characters in a film used action and facial expressions to convey feeling.

Students in the upper range (top 25%) of the theatre responding scale were able to:

- Make complex inferences based on scripts, film, and audiotape about character, set, and costume.
- Analyze and explain the suitability of the theme music for a radio play, how to stage a portion of that play told by a narrator, and how an actor used his voice to convey character.
- Analyze the importance of the lead female's costume in *Jezebel* and how characters in that film used action and facial expressions to convey feeling.

For these three dimensions of the activity, most students scored fairly high on spatial awareness and vocal production, but most fell short on expression, which assessed the ability to change pitch, volume, pace, and tone of the voice to convey meaning.



Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Spatial Awareness

Score Level	Percentages
4-Extensive	3
3-Essential	82
2-Partial	11
1-Unacceptable	5

0% 50% 100%

NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Vocal Production

Score Level	Percentages
3-Acceptable	93
2-Partial	7
1-Unacceptable	0

0% 50% 100%

Percentage of Eighth Graders Receiving Various Scores — Expression

Score Level	Percentages
3-Acceptable	10
2-Partial	33
1-Unacceptable	57

0% 50% 100%

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

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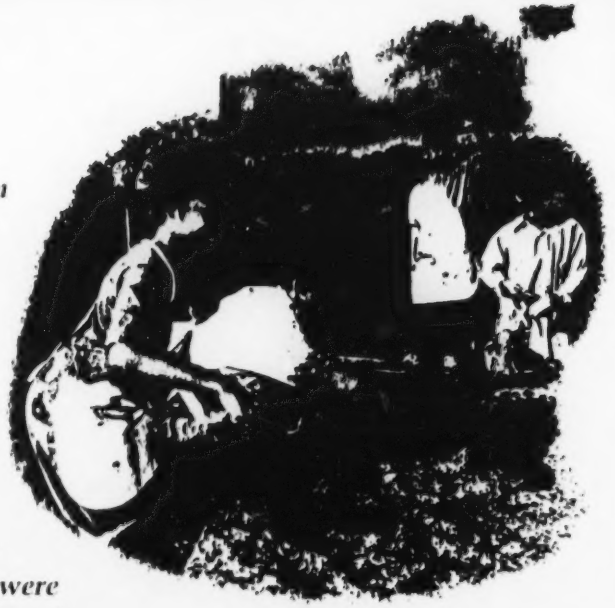
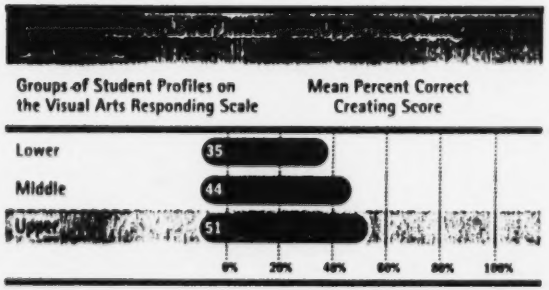
Visual Arts



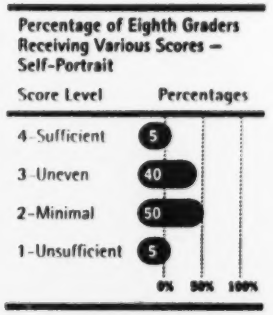
The visual arts assessment was given to a national sample of 2,999 students, using a rich assortment of artwork from a broad range of artists. The students were asked to use different arts media and tools to draw, construct collages, and model clay in completing their responses. Students were also asked to create solutions for real-world design problems. The completed student work was either photographed or collected by the assessment facilitator for later scoring.

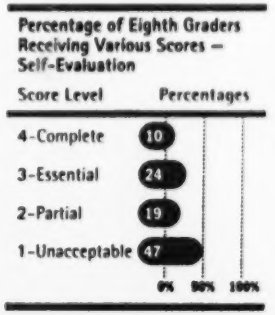
As with music and theatre, all students were administered a set of paper-and-pencil items in a classroom setting to assess their knowledge and skills in responding to the visual arts.



Students who did well on the paper-and-pencil responding activities also did well on the creating tasks.

Students were also asked to complete a self-portrait of themselves and to evaluate what they created. Both the work and the student self-evaluation were scored to provide a context for understanding the student's intent and use of expressive qualities.





Overall, students did a fair job on the self-portrait task, but most were unable to express their ideas clearly and effectively in the self-evaluation.

Student 6: Sample Self-Portrait Response Receiving a Score of Sufficient

Student 6: Sample Self-Evaluation Response Receiving a Score of Complete

Explain what you hoped to communicate about yourself in your drawing.

I wanted to show that I'm good at art.

Discuss at least three specific things about your self-portrait that communicate your personality. In your answer, talk in detail about how you used the oil pastels and/or charcoal to create the things you talk about.

1. I put the makeup of the guitarist from KISS on my face.
2. I was holding my favorite instrument, a guitar, which I play.
3. My hair was messy because I don't care about it.

At left is an example of a student who received the highest score on both the self-portrait and the self-evaluation.

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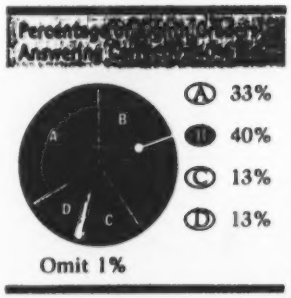
Multiple-choice questions are sometimes an effective and efficient way to collect information about a student's basic knowledge when assessing the visual arts. The students were given a reproduction of a self-portrait done by Käthe Kollwitz in charcoal and asked about technique and expressive qualities.

Sample Question 1

This question measures students' abilities to recognize a feature of composition in the Kollwitz self-portrait. The question was scored either correct or incorrect. The correct answer is B.

Look at self-portrait A. Which of the following is an important aspect of the composition (arrangement of shapes, lines, and forms) of the drawing?

- (A) Linear perspective
- (B) Horizontal emphasis
- (C) Radial emphasis
- (D) Symmetry



Student scores from the responding section placed them in the lower 25%, middle 50%, or upper 25%.

Students who were in the lower range (bottom 25%) of the visual arts responding scale were able to:

- Make some basic observations about the technical aspects or subjects of artworks (such as a quality of color in an Egon Schiele self-portrait or the presence of a factory in a Romare Bearden collage).
- Offer sparse interpretations of what an artist might have been trying to communicate when creating a work of art.
- Make simple inferences about package design (for example, an advantage of mailing a poster in a mailing tube).

Students who were in the middle range (middle 50%) of the visual arts responding scale were able to:

- Identify one characteristic of charcoal in a Käthe Kollwitz self-portrait.
- Make some observations about and comparisons of concepts in works of art (such as near and far, or realism or a lack of realism).
- Make some initial connections between technical aspects of works and their expressive qualities, linking characteristics like color with their intended meaning in the self-portraits they were asked to create as part of the assessment.
- Apply simple design principles to describe characteristics of their own designs for a package to carry a fish on a bicycle.

Students who were in the upper range (upper 25%) of the visual arts responding scale were able to:

- Support interpretations of a Schiele self-portrait and a William Sergeant Kendall mother-and-child portrait, with specific references to characteristics such as line, composition, background, and color.
- Identify the historical and cultural contexts for several works of art and identify the genre of a Bearden collage and the historical period of a mother-and-child portrait.
- Apply design principles to analyses of the operation and materials of their own designs for a package to carry a fish on a bicycle.

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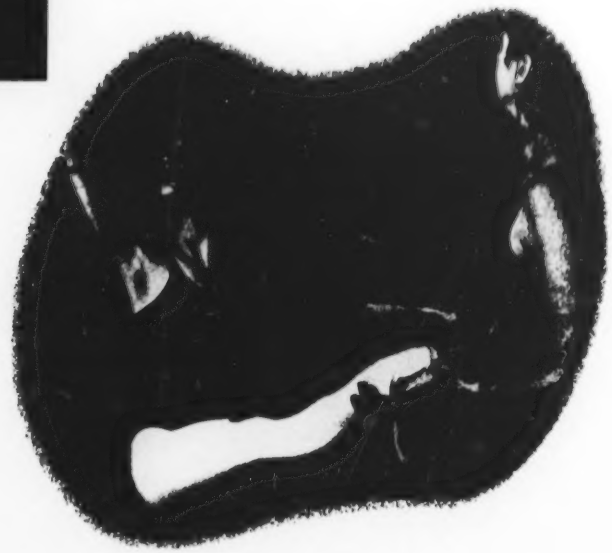
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

dance

The assessment for dance was fully developed and field-tested with the other arts areas. However, the assessment was not administered because of the low incidence of dance programs in the nation's schools.

The **NAEP 1997 Arts Report Card** *does provide a description of the assessment that is parallel to the other arts areas. Information about the field test of the assessment at the fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade levels will also be available in the* **NAEP 1995–97 Arts Field Test Process Report.**



The Content Description of the NAEP Dance Assessment

"Philippine" (Responding block)	Students view segments of three videotaped dances (a Philippine Singkal dance, an Irish step dance, and a West African dance) and apply their knowledge of dance elements, such as movement qualities and choreographic techniques, to the dances. And Still We Dance: Philippine Courtesy of World Arts West; Irish Step Dance Courtesy of World Arts West; West African Dance Courtesy of World Arts West.
"Eagle" (Responding block)	Students view segments of two videotaped dances (an American Indian dance and a Russian folk dance) and apply their knowledge of dance elements, such as movement qualities, choreographic techniques, and cultural and stylistic contexts, to the dances.
"White Web" (Responding block)	Students view segments of three dances from the movie *White Nights*, with Gregory Hines and Mikhail Baryshnikov. The segments include examples of both jazz and modern dance. Students apply their knowledge of dance elements, such as movement qualities, choreographic techniques, and cultural and stylistic contexts, to the dances. Finally, students view a contemporary dance based on a spider motif (created for NAEP featuring six children) and write a brief review analyzing and evaluating the dance.
"Jazz" (Performing block)	After a warm-up, students are asked to learn an extended movement phrase that uses jazz steps from a dance facilitator. The students then perform the phrase, and their performances are captured on videotape.
"Metamorphosis"	After a warmup, students are asked to work with a partner to create

The following is an example of a performing activity from the dance assessment, with setup instructions and a list of criteria to be assessed.

Sample Task: the "Jazz" Block

In this task, students learn an extended movement phrase that uses jazz steps. The students first participate in a three-minute warmup and then are taught the jazz phrase in several sections by a dance facilitator. After they are taught the phrase, they are asked to perform it three times. The first time students perform it with the facilitator. They are then given 30 seconds to practice. The second time and third time they perform the dance on their own. The students in the front and back rows switch places for the third performance.

The task assesses students' abilities to accurately recall and reproduce movement, and to demonstrate physical technique and focus and expression. The criteria that students are scored on and the setup for the task are shown below.

1A. Student demonstrates awareness of rhythm by moving on the pulse (beat) of the music during key parts of the phrase.

1B. Student demonstrates the concept of isolating body parts (counts 3 & 4 of sections 1 & 2).

1C. Student accurately repeats the sequence of the entire movement phrase.

1D. Student demonstrates sustained reach (counts 9-11 in Section 2).

1E. Student demonstrates balance (counts 3-6 of Section 3).

1F. Student demonstrates jumps accurately (counts 11-12 in Section 3).

1G. Student demonstrates dynamics called for in the dance phrase.

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"Metamorphosis" (Creating/ Performing block)

After a warmup, students are asked to work with a partner to create a movement sequence based on the idea of metamorphosis, using different compositional elements such as time, space, and energy. The students then perform their composition, and their performances are captured on videotape.

1F. Student demonstrates jumps accurately (counts 11-12 in Section A)

1G. Student demonstrates dynamics called for in the dance phrase

Setup:

Four students are spaced in two staggered lines (see diagram below) so that the students can see the facilitator and be visible to the video camera. The space must be at least 20' x 20', and the entire room at least 30' x 40', so that the video camera can simultaneously focus on all four students within the performance area.

X X

X X

Five "blocks," or groups, of assessment activities were prepared for the dance assessment. Three were designed to measure responding tasks, one measured a performing task, and one was a combination of performing and creating. Videos of different dancers and dances were to be shown to students for the three responding questions, and trained dancers and dance educators were used to convey the instructions in the creating and performing exercises. Examples of the types of questions and tasks are included here, but because the assessment was not administered, no results are provided.

In the following example, four students are asked to create a movement sequence with a partner and perform it within a twelve-foot space. The criteria being scored are provided.

Sample Task: the "Metamorphosis" Block

In this task, students collaborate with a partner to create a movement sequence based on the idea of metamorphosis, using elements of dance composition including time, space, and energy. Students demonstrate an ability to collaborate with a partner to achieve solutions to a movement task, create and perform improvisational and compositional structures, replicate movement, perform with physical technique, and communicate through movement. The aspects of Creating and Performing that students are scored on are listed below.

1A. The dance begins and ends with a clear, still pose (scored in second performance only).

1B. The pair accurately repeats the sequence of the dance.

1C. The pair performs their dance together with smoothness, focus and expression.

1D. The pair demonstrates at least two clear, different shapes in the dance (not including beginning or ending pose).

1E. The pair demonstrates use of high, middle, and low movement levels in the dance.

1F. The dance incorporates the use of sharp and smooth movement qualities.

1G. Effectiveness of the dance as a whole.

As with the other assessments, dance made use of short-answer questions to measure students' ability to perceive and analyze different elements of dance. In this question, students are asked to observe a set of dances on a videotape and address the three elements being explored.

Question 2 measures students' abilities to analyze compositional elements in dance, such as time, space, and energy.

2. Describe the Philippine dance (Dance 1). In your answer, discuss in detail: use of timing (rhythm and tempo), use of space (how the dancers moved in and through the performance space and around one another), and the use of force/energy (the qualities and mood of the movements the dancers made).

   1. Use of timing:
   2. Use of space:
   3. Use of force/energy:

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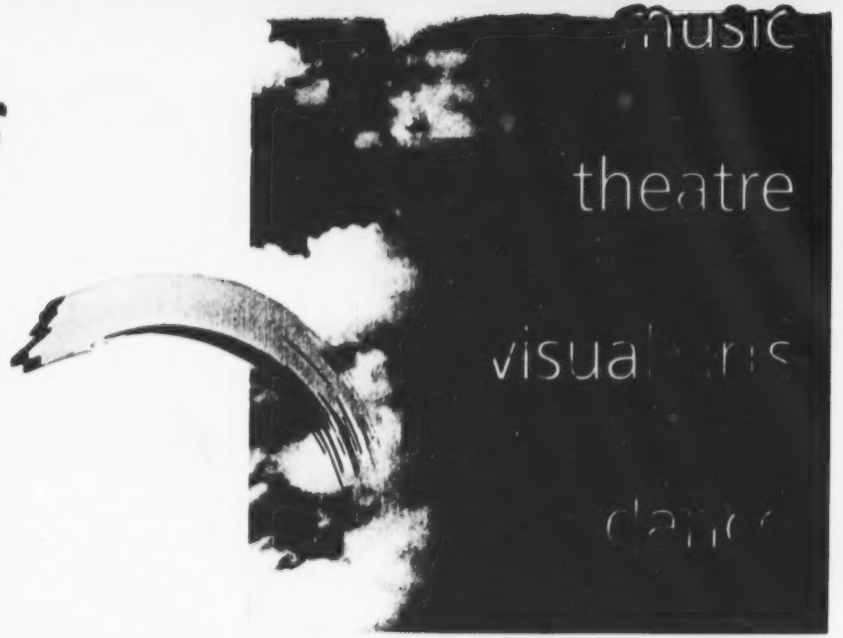
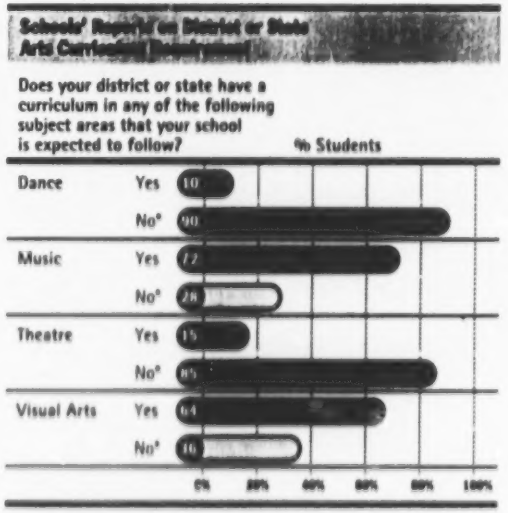
The Context of Arts Programs



The NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment Report Card also examines the contexts for arts learning in the schools. It provides some important evidence about who is teaching, what is being taught, where the instruction takes place, and—most importantly—whether students have the fundamental opportunity to learn the arts at all. For example, the schools in the assessment were asked whether their district or state had a curriculum for them to follow. Ninety percent reported not having a curriculum for dance, 85% reported no curriculum for theatre, 28% reported no curriculum for music, and 36% reported no curriculum to follow for visual arts.



* Percentages in this row are representative of that portion of the sample that did not respond "Yes." For this series of background questions, repondents were to indicate only those statements that were applicable.

The NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment illustrates the gap between the expectations for student achievement found in the* NAEP Framework *and the reality found in the schools. It gives us a clearer focus on where time, effort, and material resources might be employed to

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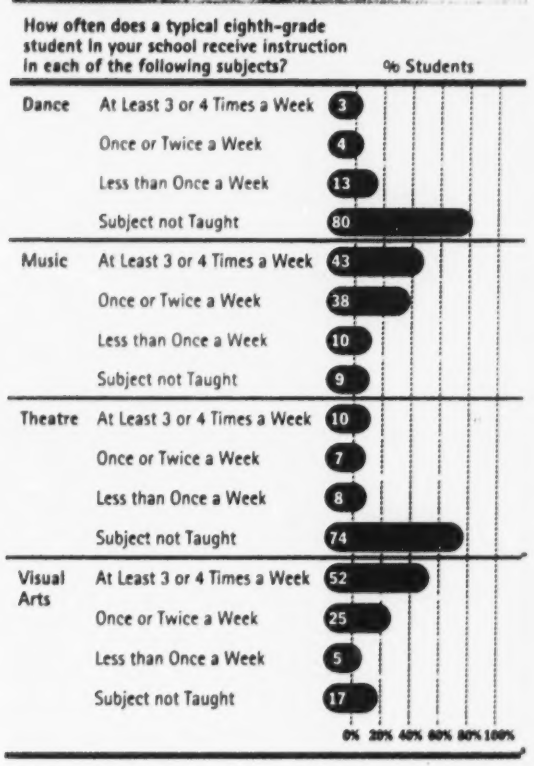
The schools were also asked about the frequency of arts instruction in the four arts areas. The graph below provides a profile of those data.

Schools' Reports on the Frequency With Which Their Students Receive Instruction in the Arts


How often does a typical eighth-grade student in your school receive instruction in each of the following subjects?
% Students
Dance
At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week 3
Once or Twice a Week 4
Less than Once a Week 13
Subject not Taught 80
Music
At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week 43
Once or Twice a Week 38
Less than Once a Week 10
Subject not Taught 9
Theatre
At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week 10
Once or Twice a Week 7
Less than Once a Week 8
Subject not Taught 74
Visual Arts
At Least 3 or 4 Times a Week 52
Once or Twice a Week 25
Less than Once a Week 5
Subject not Taught 17
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

diminish the gap.

The assessment made extensive use of video, audio, and digital technology in the development, implementation, scoring, and reporting of the results. The lessons NAEP learns from the arts assessment will be applied to future assessments.

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SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 Arts Assessment.

Other Publications and Related Materials

For additional information and a more complete report of the findings with information from the background questionnaires, please refer to the ***NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment Report Card*** or the ***CD-ROM*** that provides some of the actual sights and sounds from the assessment. These reports will be followed by the ***NAEP 1995–97 Field Test Process Report,*** the release of the ***NAEP Arts Assessment Tasks*** (including all related materials not covered by copyright agreements), and other focused research findings from the assessment. Please consult the information below for ordering these and other resources about the assessment.

The Arts Education Assessment Framework, National Assessment Governing Board, 1994 (available now).

Focus on NAEP: a series of five short descriptions about the content and process of the 1997 NAEP Arts Assessment (available now).

NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment Report Card: (available now).

NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment Report Card: CD-ROM (available Winter 1999).

NAEP 1995–97 Field Test Process Report: (available Winter 1999).

Focused Research Reports: (available 1999).

For more information or copies of any materials on the NAEP arts assessment listed above, either phone 877–4–ED PUBS (877–433–7827) or check the NCES publications Web site at http://nces.ed.gov

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